

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
TULSA DISTRICT**

**LAKE EUFAULA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING (LEAC)
12 Dec 2016**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Jeff Knack, the Designated Federal Officer (DFO), called the Lake Eufaula Advisory Committee Meeting (LEAC) meeting to order at 10:00 am on 12 December 2016 at the Three Forks Harbor, 5201 Three Forks Road, Fort Gibson, OK 74434 1 Mr. Greg Buckley, Chairman, presiding.

LEAC Members Present:

Greg Buckley, Chair
Connie Morris, Vice Chair
Michael Denny, Member
Muskogee Emergency Management, no member present
Don Groom, Member
Pennie Embry, Member
Julie Cunningham, Member
Scott Robinson, Member
Nicki Fuller, Member
Buck Hunt, Member
Ken Collins, Member
Muscogee Creek Nation, no member present

Also Present:

Colonel Richard Hussin, USACE, Tulsa District Commander
Jeff Knack, Designated. Federal Officer
Earl Groves, USACE Tulsa
Steve Nolen, USACE Tulsa
Greg Estep, USACE Tulsa
Craig Robbins, USACE Tulsa

2. OPENING COMMENTS BY TULSA DISTRICT COMMANDER

Colonel Hussin thanked everyone for being at the meeting. He stated the ultimate purpose of the advisory committee is to inform the Corps of Engineers on the best balance of all operations of Lake Eufaula as it relates to water supply, hydropower, recreation, environmental stewardship and balance each of those issues. He also made the comparison of the Lake Texoma Advisory Committee and how well it's worked over the last 30 plus years.

3. INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND USACE STAFF

Colonel Hussin introduced himself and had each LEAC member and USACE staff introduce themselves.

4. DISCUSSION FOR REPLACEMENT OF CREEK NATION COMMITTEE SEAT

Jeff Knack presented information on background on selection of committee members, also discussed Department of Army process for nominating a new committee member.

Conversation of requirements for selection of a new committee member was initiated by Greg Buckley. Penny Embry suggested another tribe (Choctaw Nation), Connie Morris supported this request as well as the remaining present committee members. No objections were made to this request. Further discussion was held on notifying the Creek Nation of their committee seat status and that they'd be given other opportunities to participate in this committee. Those opportunities will come through the public comment process or in the future when another seat becomes available due to term limits. Jeff Knack stated that he will coordinate the recommendation for selection of the Choctaw Nation through the Department of the Army committee review process.

5. DISCUSSION OF WHITE PAPERS

Jeff Knack turned the floor over to Chairperson Greg Buckley to initiate discussion of the white papers provided as a result of the determination made on the June 6, 2016 meeting. The purpose of these white papers is to provide the committee a perspective as to what each agency hopes to gain through the function of this committee. The committee members that provided requested white papers were; Connie Morris, Buck Hunt, Penny Embry, Nicki Fuller, Don Groom, and Michael Denny. The discussion provided perspective and goals of their agency and how they represented the interests of the recreation, hydropower, environmental, and water supply functions of Eufaula Lake. A copy of each of these white papers was provided to every committee members in attendance.

The individuals that had not provided white papers still provided the group perspective as to what they hope to accomplish through this committee. Greg Buckley-City of Eufaula, discussed his perspective and why Lake Eufaula is important because of recreation, flood risk management and water supply. Scott Robinson-Muskogee Port Director, briefly discussed his main focus of Navigation, importance of providing Navigation days for Users and interest in how the Corps manages the water. Ken Collins-US Fish and Wildlife Service, described how his main focus is Threatened & Endangered species, migratory birds, managing continuing benefits to the public, fisheries program-partnership with ODWC on Paddlefish specifically to Lake Eufaula. Julie Cunningham-Oklahoma Water Resources Board, described how important Lake Eufaula is because of its storage capacity and the amount of water supply available to the citizens of the State of Oklahoma.

6. Q&A WITH USACE ON PERTINENT EUFAULA DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

1. What was the original purpose and plan formulation process for Eufaula Lake?

Answer: Steve Nolen described the process was to look at all the intended purposes of Eufaula Lake, which were hydropower, navigation, water supply, environmental stewardship, and flood risk management. The cost to construct a project for identified services cannot outweigh the financial benefits to be realized or provided by completion of a project. Otherwise known as the cost vs. benefits ratio which Eufaula Lake met the requirements and allowed Congress to authorize the project.

2. How and when did recreation become an authorized purpose?

Answer: Colonel Hussin requested Steve Nolen speak to the purpose of Recreation and how it relates today. Steve explained that recreation was not an original authorized purpose of Eufaula Lake. The authorization to provide recreation is provided in subsequent legislation, including the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

3. How is Eufaula Lake managed in regards to established priorities?

Answer: Eufaula Lake is managed based on the existing lake elevation and authorized purposes. Greg Estep explained how the reservoir control manual is followed anytime Eufaula Lake is above normal pool (585 msl). This is flood risk management operations and the lake is operated per the manual until it returns to elevation 585 msl. Greg also explained the conservation pool is that portion of the pool that exists between elevations 585 msl and 565 msl. All business functions are allowed to operate within this range of elevation. Explanation was also given that Southwest Power Administration and water users have a right to use this pool all the way down to elevation 565 msl. The pool below 565 msl is known as the inactive pool and no hydropower or water withdraw can occur once the lake reaches this elevation.

Michael Denny-Southwest Power administration and Nicki Fuller-Southwest Power Resources Association wanted the committee members to know they look for alternative sources of power once Eufaula Lake recedes below elevation 585 msl. This alternative power is usually from another lake that has more water available for hydropower generation or is purchased from another market.

4. What is the expected life span of Eufaula Lake?

Answer: Eufaula Lake does not have an established lifespan. The reason why the public has heard the term 50 year lifespan is because a definitive date had to be used while calculating the benefit vs. cost ratio. This date was a 50 year outlook and was based on a need for an economic calculation and not an actual lifespan. Sedimentation was also addressed because it sometimes is heard of causing a 50 year lifespan. The explanation provided understanding of how Eufaula Lake is not silting at a rate where it will be full of sediment within 50 years.

5. What is the reallocation process?

Answer: Steve Nolen described reallocation as a process to change a projects water allocations in regards to its authorized purposes. The process is difficult, can take up to three years, and costs millions of dollars.

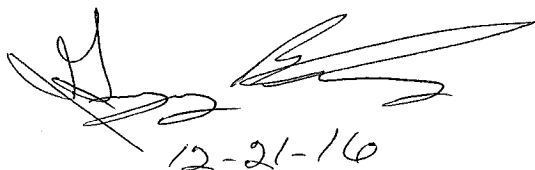
7. CLOSING REMARKS

The committee members agreed that it is a good idea to have a discussion in the February/March timeframe about the next meeting topics and decision point.

Colonel Hussin committed that Corps personnel would gladly assist in this discussion and are willing to provide presentations on any desired topics.

8. ADJOURN

Jeff Knack adjourned the meeting at 12:00.



12-21-16